

ORVs on Post

Off-road recreational vehicle (ORV) is a popular winter and summer activity in many parts of Alaska including Fort Wainwright. Now that the weather is improving there is an increased desire to head off-road and that desire only increases as the temperatures rise with the advent of spring into summer. Before you head out on post on your ORV there are military regulations you need to be aware of.

For military regulations purposes an ORV is defined as a motorized vehicle primarily designated for operation over hard surfaces including frozen rivers and lakes. They include snowmobiles, dirt bikes, four-wheelers (you can not operate three wheelers on military training lands), swamp buggies, civilian small unit support vehicles and four-wheel drive vehicles. ORVs are further defined into two classifications, those with a gross weight (GVW) of 1500 lbs. or less, and those over 1500 lbs.

Within military lands all land is closed to ORV recreation use except those areas and trails, which are determined suitable and specifically designated for ORV use. On Main Post areas that are closed to ORV use include: all areas south of the Chena River except the trail from Raven Roost Storage Lot to the Bailey bridge over the Chena River, the east and west approach zones to the airfield, forward operations base adjacent to the east approach lights, the NBC chamber; Birch Hill ski area, skeet range, and associated areas, area encompassing the White Bear Loop cross country ski area, and all areas west and south of Canol Road.

Areas that are off-limits to all forms of recreation including ORV include the Tank Farm at the end of Canol Road, sanitary landfill, Birch Hill radio antenna towers, 100 meters in all directions from the fence surrounding the Upper Ammunition Supply Point, and the Small Arms Range Complex south of the Richardson Highway.

In training areas that are open for ORV use during frozen ground (6+inches of snow cover) conditions there are no restrictions for any ORVs. During unfrozen summer conditions all ORVs over 1500 lbs must stay on approved existing roads and trails. There are no restrictions on ORVs under 1500 lbs.

All ORVs must be registered with the Alaska Department of Motor Vehicles and personnel living on post must register their ORVs with the Provost Marshall Office.

No persons under 14 years of age will operate an ORV unless accompanied by a parent or guardian at least 18 years of age. ORVs can not be operated in reckless or negligent manner. On post the ORV speed limit is 25 mph or lower if posted. All operators and passengers are required to wear the same safety equipment as required of a motorcycle operator including a shatter proof helmet and eye protection. Military personnel and their dependents that wish to operate their ORVs on post are required to take an ORV safety class conducted at the Outdoor Recreation Center. ORV operators and owners are financially liable for any damage to government or private property resulting from their activity. Do not use utility poles or other structures to winch your stuck ORV, especially

utility poles. Collisions with utility poles and guide wires or using them to winch your vehicle may bring down utility poles electrocuting or crushing the ORV operator and bystanders. It is always safer to remain clear of utility easements to avoid injury to yourself, damage to your vehicle and utility equipment.

Prior to entering military training lands to ride off road or any recreational activity participants 16 years of age or older are required to have a Recreation Access Permit and check in on the USARTRAK system. Permits and USARTRAK information are available at the Visitor Center, MWR, and Natural Resources Office.

For more information about operating your ORV or other outdoor recreation activities go to www.usarak.army.mil/conservation or call your Natural Resources Office at 361-6490 or the Provost Marshall Office at 353-7535. Ride safe and Responsibly.